

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant:	WSI (I) – RWP, LLC (Owner) Great Wolf Resorts (User)
Location:	1700 American Boulevard East
Request:	Conditional Use Permit and Major Revision to Final Development Plans to expand and renovate an existing hotel and water park.
Existing Land Use and Zoning:	Hotel; zoned FD-1 (PD) (AR-22) - Freeway Development (Planned Development) (Airport Runway)
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:	North – Interstate Highway 494 right-of-way South – Hotel and office; zoned FD-1 (PD) and FD-1 (PD) (AR-22) East – State Highway 77 right-of-way West – Office and bank; zoned FD-1 (AR-22)
Comprehensive Plan Designation:	Community Commercial

HISTORY

City Council Action:	11/02/1998 – Approved Preliminary and Final Plat for Decathlon Hotel Addition and Preliminary and Final Development Plans for a hotel (Case 6001BC-98). 04/19/2004 – Approved a Major Revision to Final Development Plans for a 403-room hotel with a water park (Case 6001A-04). 09/27/2004 – Approved a Major Revision to Final Development Plans and a Change of Condition for the exterior design of a 403-room hotel as approved in Case 6001A-04 (Case 6001B-04). 12/18/2006 – Approved Variances to increase the size of exterior wall signage (Cases 6001ABC-06).
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CHRONOLOGY

Planning Commission Action: 01/26/17 – Recommended approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Final Development Plan for an expansion and renovation to an existing hotel use, subject to conditions.

City Council Agenda: 02/06/17 – Development Business Agenda

PROPOSAL

Great Wolf Resorts is in the process of purchasing the Radisson Hotel and Water Park of America located at 1700 American Boulevard East. Upon acquisition, Great Wolf Resorts desires to complete a significant renovation. The existing 403-room hotel would be increased by one room to a total of 404 hotel rooms. The hotel use expansion necessitates a Conditional Use Permit, as hotels are a conditional use in the Freeway Development FD-1 Zoning District.

In addition to the modest hotel room count expansion, Great Wolf intends to convert a portion of the underground parking garage to administrative offices and meeting/banquet room space. The 87 space underground parking garage would be reduced by 46 parking stalls to accommodate the proposed changes. Main floor renovations are also proposed to include the addition of retail space, a ropes course and climbing wall, additional food and beverage options, and the renovation of the existing restaurant and arcade. Finish renovations are planned to both the water park and lobby. Modifications to the hotel second floor include the removal of the spa to construct three hotel rooms, the removal of three hotel guest rooms to provide better circulation, and the renovation of a lounge area to one hotel suite. The net result of these modifications is one additional hotel room, expanding the total number of hotel rooms from 403 to 404. Additional second floor improvements include the installation of an approximately 1,000 square-foot bowling alley (4 lanes) and one additional restaurant venue.

The proposed hotel and waterpark renovation include limited exterior modifications to the hotel site. Exterior improvements proposed include a porte-cochere expansion 20 feet to the south. As a result of the porte-cochere expansion, 13 90-degree parking stalls would be altered to create five parallel parking stalls, reducing the total surface parking stalls on the site from 514 to 506. With the proposed modifications to the hotel and site, total site parking would be reduced from 601 to 547 parking stalls.

Great Wolf resorts is proposing to restrict access to all restaurant, retail and entertainment venues to hotel guests only. The only exception to the access restriction proposed is the meeting and banquet space planned for the renovated hotel. Meeting and banquet space could be rented to members of the public. For the purposes of zoning, restricting access to the restaurant, retail and entertainment venues is important in determining the quantity of parking required by City Code.

ANALYSIS

The review of the expansion of the hotel use and proposed building and site renovations are based on the performance standards applicable to hotels located in the FD-1 Freeway Development Zoning District.

Land Use

To accommodate the proposed expansion and renovation of the hotel, Great Wolf Resorts must obtain a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). A hotel is a conditional use in the FD-1 Freeway Development Zoning District. The existing hotel previously did not obtain a CUP, as conditional uses were previously accepted as permitted uses through the Planned Development (PD) review process. While the expansion of the existing hotel is modest (one additional hotel room), the subject CUP will apply to the hotel use as a whole – 404 hotel rooms and accessory uses (water park, restaurants, etc.).

Code Compliance

Table 1 includes applicable performance standards related to the proposed building renovations in the FD-1 Zoning District. In addition, the building addition and site improvements are evaluated against performance standards for hotels. For the record, the site received deviations for reduced landscape yards through the Planned Development (PD) process when the hotel was approved in 2004. As the modifications to the site are limited, no additional deviations are requested at this time. The elements reviewed in Table 1 only relate to the proposed site alterations adjacent to the expanded porte-cochere.

Table 1: City Code Analysis for Hotels in the FD-1 Zoning District

Standard and Code Section	Proposed	Meets Standard?
Building Setbacks (Sections 21.301.02(d)(2) and 19.63(a)(4): Front-yard setback – 60 feet	Setback of porte-cochere (smallest proposed): Front-yard (south) – 61 feet	Yes
Parking – See Table 3. Proposed facility (if restricted to hotel guests only) would require 541 parking spaces.	547 parking stalls	Yes
Parking Stall Dimensions – 8 feet by 22 feet for parallel parking (Section 21.301.06(c)(2)(C)(i))	9 feet by 22 feet	Yes

Standard and Code Section	Proposed	Meets Standard?
Drive Aisles - Adjacent to parallel parking must be 24 feet wide (Section 21.301.06(c)(2)(C)).	Modified parking area near porte-cochere – 25 feet	Yes
Landscaping – Trees / Shrubs – One tree per 2,500 sq. ft. and one shrub per 1,000 sq. ft. of disturbed area (Sec 19.52(c)(2)). 153 trees (Code requirement) and 161 shrubs (as approved in 2004)	Maintain landscaping installed per plan approved in 2004	Applicant must verify that all plant material exists per 2004 landscape plan or that the site meets Code (see comments)
Landscape Yard –20 feet adjacent to streets (Section 19.52(c)(4)).	South (adjacent to modified parking) – 25 feet	Yes
Screening – Parking lots with 5 stalls or more within 40 feet of the public right-of-way must have perimeter screening (Section 19.52(d)(3)(A)).	Perimeter screening is provided in the form of a berm and perennial grasses	Yes
Lighting for Parking Surface - 2.0 foot-candle required (Section 21.301.07(c)(13))	Comply with Lighting Plan approved in 2004	Site currently non-conforming to 2004 plan (see comments)

Building Design and Signage

The proposed exterior improvements to the existing hotel and water park are limited to a porte-cochere expansion and coating of the exterior façade of the building. The porte-cochere would be extended 20 feet to the south utilizing new building materials, including stone columns, timber trusses and a metal roof. Porte-cocheres are not subject to the City's exterior building material standards. The proposed porte-cochere is Code-compliant. The proposed coating of the exterior façade is intended to change the color of the hotel and waterpark to be consistent with the Great Wolf brand. The City Code does not allow for the coating of exterior facades with exceptions as noted in Section 19.63.08. City staff will evaluate the subject property to determine if coating the primary exterior walls would be permitted in this case. Staff is recommending a condition that exterior materials be approved by the Planning Manager.

The elevation and site plans for the proposed hotel renovation depict wall and freestanding signage. It should be noted the City has an approved a Uniform Sign Design (USD) for the existing Radisson hotel. Any changes to the signage allocation and location must comply with Section 19.121 of the City Code, which regulates signage for hotels and the approved USD. Staff is recommending a condition all future signage comply with City Code requirements signage for hotels and the USD be revised accordingly.

Landscaping and Lighting

The subject property was developed in 2004. A landscaping plan was reviewed and approved prior to the construction of the hotel and water park. As part of the Conditional Use Permit review, the City will review the site for conformance to the requirements of the City Code. In this case, the property must comply with the approved landscape plan from 2004, or the site can be brought into conformance with current standards per Section 19.52 of the City Code. Table 2 identifies the required amount of plant material according to the 2004 approved plan and the requirements of City Code

Table 2: Landscape Quantities for Great Wolf Resort Hotel and Water Park

Use Description	Standard	Trees	Shrubs
City Code (Sec. 19.52)	1 tree per 2,500 square feet 1 shrub per 1,000 square feet	153	382
2004 Approved Landscape Plan	N/A	160	762 (not including perennials)

Given the significant number of shrubs installed above the amount required by City Code, staff is confident the site is Code-compliant for the quantity of shrubs. Related to trees, staff has completed an informal count primarily based on aerial photography. Based on aerial photography, it appears some of the trees that were installed in 2004 were removed or been relocated. Staff recommends a condition that the application submit a tree inventory or revised landscape plan to the City to demonstrate compliance with City Code with regard to the quantity of trees on site. If the site contains less trees than 153 trees, the applicant will need to submit a landscape plan for approval and install additional trees to comply with City Code. In addition, the parking lot islands must have trees maintained as required by the City Code.

Similar to the previously approved landscape plan, a lighting plan was approved when the existing hotel was constructed. The approved lighting plan met City Code requirements for the illumination of parking, pedestrian and access areas. However, the site lighting was inspected by City staff in 2008 and found to be well-below the maintained light levels as determined by the approved lighting plan. The applicant will be responsible to inspect the site lighting and provide light levels in conformance with the approved plan from 2004 or the City Code.

Access, Circulation, and Parking

While access and circulation remain unchanged, the proposed project does include significant modifications to the total quantity of parking on-site. A portion of the underground parking garage will be renovated to administrative offices and meeting room space, resulting in a reduction of 46 underground parking stalls. Proposed modifications to the surface parking lot are more modest in scope. Due to the expansion of the porte-cochere, 13 90-degree parking stalls south of the porte-cochere will be revised to five parallel parking stalls, resulting in a loss

of eight surface parking stalls. Overall, site parking would be reduced from 601 to 547 parking stalls.

In calculating the quantity of parking required by Code for the proposed facility, it is important to recognize that the proposed hotel includes accessory uses above and beyond a typical hotel that have the potential to generate additional parking demand. Accessory uses above and beyond a typical hotel include the water park, additional restaurant venues (more than one venue), and additional retail and entertainment venues (ropes course, bowling alley, etc.). These types of uses would typically be factored into a required parking calculation. However, Great Wolf Resorts plans to restrict access to all accessory facilities within the hotel, with exception of the meeting/banquet space, to hotel and meeting/banquet space guests only. The applicants have been consistent in their communications with City staff that the Great Wolf Resorts operational model restricts the use of the waterpark and other accessory venues to hotel and meeting/banquet space guests only. This proposed restriction is critical in calculating the City Code parking quantity required. Opening the restaurant, water park or other amenities to the public would require review by the City Council and Planning Commission and consideration of appropriate parking levels, likely supported by a parking study.

As a result, staff has utilized the required parking quantities for both hotels and meeting space to calculate the required parking for the proposed hotel and water park. It should be noted that the required parking for meeting space is based on the occupancy standards of the Fire Code, along with an internal capture factor that the City has consistently utilized for hotels. In addition, staff has included extra employment as a parking factor at a ratio of one parking stall for every one employee above and beyond typical hotel operations at the maximum shift. The intent of accounting for extra employees is to ensure that there is enough parking to account for a hotel that has a larger operational footprint than a typical hotel. Based on these methods, staff has calculated the required level of parking in Table 3.

Table 3: Parking Analysis for Great Wolf Resort Hotel and Water Park

Use Description	Standard	Proposed	Required Parking (stalls)
Hotel	1.1 stalls per hotel room	404 rooms	444.4
Meeting/Banquet Space	1/3 occupancy of 1 person/15 square feet (25% internal capture factor)	3,742 square feet	62.4
Additional Employees (beyond typical hotel operations)	1 stall per employee	34 employees	34
Total Parking Requirement			541 stalls
Parking Proposed			547 stalls

Based on staff's calculations, the renovated hotel would comply with City Code requirements. However, compliance with the City's parking requirement is dependent on all components of the facility except the meeting rooms being restricted to hotel and meeting/banquet space guests only. As a result, staff is recommending a condition that the applicant enter into a site development agreement that would formalize the proposed use restriction of the hotel and accessory uses. This agreement would be recorded with the deed of the property, establishing that the use restriction follows the property, as opposed to one specific owner.

Traffic Analysis

No significant impacts to the adjacent traffic patterns due to the renovation of the existing hotel and water park have been identified.

Transit and Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

This redevelopment will require a Tier 2 TDM plan, which allows the property owner to choose from a menu of TDM options. The owner has not yet submitted a Tier 2 TDM checklist.

Fire Preventions and Public Safety

For existing and future operation of the site, maintaining access, water supply, and addressing are critical factors. These factors will need to be maintained through all phases of construction of the project. All access and circulation design must meet or exceed the minimum standards for fire prevention and be maintained in accordance to the approved plan, including a surface to provide all weather driving capabilities. Apparatus access roads shall be asphalt or concrete and support a minimum of 80,000 pounds.

Regarding modifications to the hotel and waterpark, the facility has standing orders to replace all corroded sprinkler heads. Most of the corroded heads are located in and near the water park. All corroded heads shall be replaced. All smoke detectors that are 10 years or older shall either be replaced or pass a code compliant NFPA 72 sensitivity test. Accessible standpipe hose valves must be provided in all required new and existing stairwells. Any new and/or modified kitchens requiring a type I hood system shall have code compliant fire suppression systems.

Any changes made to the current plans, including building location, access roads, water supply, landscaping and addressing, shall be reviewed by the Fire Marshal to insure continued compliance with the fire code.

Status of Enforcement Orders

There are no open enforcement orders for this property.

Planning Commission Review

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on January 26, 2017. No one attended the public hearing. The Planning Commission inquired about the City's ability to enforce the use restriction proposed, limiting access to the water park, entertainment, restaurant and other venues. Staff explained that the use restriction would be reinforced through the execution of a site development agreement, which would be recorded against the property. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the subject Conditional Use Permit and Major Revision to Final Development Plans.

FINDINGS

Required Conditional Use Permit Findings - Section 21.501.04(e)(1)-(5)

Required Finding (1) - The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The Comprehensive Plan designates the property as Community Commercial. A hotel use with accessory entertainment venues is consistent with the Community Commercial designation. The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.

Required Finding (2) - The proposed use is not in conflict with any adopted District Plan for the area;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The property is not in a location with an adopted district plan.

Required Finding (3) - The proposed use is not in conflict with City Code provisions;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** Subject to compliance with the conditions of approval, the proposed use/development meets all City Code requirements.

Required Finding (4) - The proposed use will not create an excessive burden on parks, schools, streets, and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the planned development; and

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The hotel use is proposed to be expanded by adding one hotel room, surplus meeting/banquet space, and additional accessory food and entertainment venues. At the same time, non-guest access to the water park will be eliminated. The modifications proposed are not anticipated to increase the external impacts of the facility. The proposed modest expansion and renovation of the hotel and accessory waterpark will not create an excessive burden on parks,

schools, and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the planned development.

Required Finding (5) - The proposed use will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The modest expansion and renovation of an existing hotel and accessory waterpark is not anticipated to result in a greater intensity or differing character of use than the existing facility. The use is compatible with the surrounding land uses and the broader neighborhood. The restriction of use of the facility to hotel guests only will mitigate the potential of the site not having an adequate quantity of parking. The use is not anticipated to be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.

Required Final Development Plans Findings – Section 21.501.03(e)(1)-(7)

Required Finding (1) - The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The Comprehensive Plan designates the property as Community Commercial. A hotel use with accessory entertainment venues is consistent with the Community Commercial designation. The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.

Required Finding (2) - The proposed use is not in conflict with any adopted District Plan for the area;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The property is not in a location with an adopted district plan.

Required Finding (3) - The proposed development is not in conflict with the approved Preliminary Development Plan for the site;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The proposed renovation and modest expansion of the hotel is consistent with the Preliminary Development Plan that was approved in 1998. Subject to compliance with the conditions of approval, the proposed use/development will function in a manner consistent with the use as approved in the Preliminary Development Plan.

Required Finding (4) – All deviations from City Code requirements are in the public interest and within the parameters allowed under the Planned Development Overlay Zoning District or have previously received variance approval;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** No additional deviations from City Code associated with the proposed expansion and renovation of the hotel and waterpark are requested at this time.

Required Finding (5) - The proposed development is of sufficient size, composition, and arrangement that its construction, marketing, and operation is feasible as a complete unit without dependence upon any subsequent unit;

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The proposed renovation and modest expansion of the existing hotel is of sufficient size, composition and arrangement to be considered a complete unit without dependence on any subsequent unit.

Required Finding (6) - The proposed development will not create an excessive burden on parks, schools, streets, and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the planned development; and

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The hotel use is proposed to be expanded by adding one hotel room, surplus meeting/banquet space, and additional accessory food and entertainment venues. At the same time, non-guest access to the water park will be eliminated. The modifications proposed are not anticipated to increase the external impacts of the facility. The proposed modest expansion and renovation of the hotel and accessory waterpark will not create an excessive burden on parks, schools, and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the planned development.

Required Finding (7) - The proposed development will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.

- **Finding Met – Discussion:** The modest expansion and renovation of an existing hotel and accessory waterpark is not anticipated to result in a greater intensity or differing character of use than the existing facility. The use is compatible with the surrounding land uses and the broader neighborhood. The restriction of use of the facility to hotel guests only will mitigate the potential of the site not having an adequate quantity of parking. The use is not anticipated to be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission and staff recommend approval of the requested Conditional Use Permit and Major Revision to Final Development Plans through the following motion:

In Case PL2016-233, having been able to make the required findings, I move to adopt a resolution approving a Conditional Use Permit and move to approve a Major Revision to Final Development Plans to renovate and expand a hotel use located at 1700 American Boulevard East, subject to the conditions and Code requirements attached to the staff report.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Case PL201600233

Project Description: Conditional Use Permit and Major Revision to Final Development Plan to expand hotel floor area, add one hotel room, expand porte cochere, and make interior and exterior modifications to the waterpark and hotel

Address: 1700 AMERICAN BLVD E

The following conditions of approval are arranged according to when they must be satisfied. In addition to conditions of approval, the use and improvements must also comply with all applicable local, state, and federal codes. Codes to which the applicant should pay particular attention are included below.

1. Prior to Permit Access, circulation and parking plans must be approved by the City Engineer.
2. Prior to Permit Sewer Availability Charges (SAC) must be satisfied.
3. Prior to Permit Tier 2 Transportation Demand Management plan must be submitted (Sec. 21.301.09(b)(2)).
4. Prior to Permit Bicycle parking spaces must be provided and located throughout the site as approved by the City Engineer.
5. Prior to Permit Building must be provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system as approved by the Fire Marshal (MN Bldg. Code Sec. 903, MN.Rules Chapter 1306; MN State Fire Code Sec. 903).
6. Prior to Permit Food service plans must be approved by the Environmental Health Division (City Code Sec. 14.360).
7. Prior to Permit Exterior building materials must be approved by the Planning Manager (Sec. 19.63.08).
8. Prior to C/O A Site Development Agreement, including all conditions of approval, must be executed by the applicant and the City and must be properly recorded by the applicant with proof of recording provided to the Director of Community Development.
9. Prior to C/O Prior to occupancy, life safety requirements must be reviewed and approved by the Fire Marshal.
10. Prior to C/O A Tree Inventory must be submitted to the City to determine the existing number of trees on-site. If the site is found to be in a state of non-compliance for the quantity of trees, additional plant material must be installed to comply with Section 19.52 of the City Code. A landscape plan must be approved by the Planning Manager and landscape surety must be filed.
11. Prior to C/O The applicant must verify that maintained light levels meet the illumination levels of the 2004 approved lighting plan. Parking lot and security lighting must meet the levels of the 2004 approved plan of record or comply with Section 21.301.07 of the City Code.
12. Prior to C/O An external grease interceptor must be provided if the proposed tenant will have food preparation and service that will produce fats, oils, grease, or wax in excess of 100 mg/L. The external grease interceptor design must be approved by the Utilities Engineer. A grease interceptor maintenance

agreement must be filed with the Utilities Division, if an external grease interceptor is installed.

- 13. Ongoing The site and building improvements are limited to those as shown on the approved plans in Case File #PL201600233.
- 14. Ongoing Use of the water park and other entertainment venues is limited to hotel guests only. Use of the restaurants is limited to hotel and meeting space guests only.
- 15. Ongoing All construction-related loading, unloading, drop-off, pick-up, stockpiling, staging, and parking must take place on-site and off adjacent public streets and public rights-of-way.
- 16. Ongoing Alterations to utilities must be at the developer's expense.
- 17. Ongoing Three foot high parking lot screening must be maintained along all public street frontages, as approved by the Planning Manager (Sec. 19.52).
- 18. Ongoing All trash and recyclable materials must be stored inside the principal building (Sec. 19.51).
- 19. Ongoing Signs must be in conformance with the requirements of Chapter 19, Article X of the City Code and Uniform Design Plan.
- 20. Ongoing Development must comply with the Minnesota State Accessibility Code (Chapter 1341).
- 21. Ongoing Poured-in-place concrete curbs must be provided on the perimeter of parking lots and traffic islands (Sec 19.64).